

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5523
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 19341

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, FR, GW, UR, US
SUBJECT: FRG-SOVIET AND FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS:
POSITIVELY ASSESSED IN TWO RECENT COMMENTARIES

REF: MOSCOW 18318

SUMMARY: THE HEALTHY STATE OF DETENTE, AS MANIFESTED
AT PRESENT IN SOVIET-FRG AND SOVIET-FRENCH RELATIONS,
IS THE THEME OF SEPARATE COMMENTARIES IN IZVESTIYA
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AND PRAVDA. TRENDS ARE DESCRIBED AS POSITIVE IN
BOTH RELATIONSHIPS DESPITE RESISTANCE FROM SOME
INTERNAL AND FOREIGN FORCES SEEKING TO "POISON THE
ATMOSPHERE." WASHINGTON'S POLICIES "OPPOSING
DETENTE" ARE -- IMPLICITLY IN ONE COMMENTARY,
EXPLICITLY IN THE OTHER -- SET IN CONTRAST. THE
COMMENTARIES GIVE FURTHER EXPRESSION TO MOSCOW'S

HOPES OF INTENSIFYING CONTACTS AND DEALINGS WITH WESTERN EUROPE AT A TIME OF SLIPPAGE IN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS, BUT DO NOT SUGGEST WHAT KIND OF SPECIFIC, NEW STEPS THE SOVIETS MAY BE CONTEMPLATING. END SUMMARY.

1. IZVESTIYA COMMENTATOR GRIGOR'YANTS FINDS THAT "DEEP SHIFTS" (HIS COMMENTARY'S HEADLINE) FOR THE BETTER HAVE OCCURRED IN RELATIONS BETWEEN FRG AND USSR SINCE SIGNING THE BILATERAL TREATY OF AUGUST 12, 1970. HE LAUDS ALMOST UNASHAMEDLY (CONSIDERING THE TROUBLED POST-WAR HISTORY OF FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS) "MANY-SIDED COOPERATION" BETWEEN MOSCOW AND BONN EVIDENCED BY SUCH VARIED DEVELOPMENTS AS CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS FOR A FRG-BUILT CHEMICAL COMPLEX IN TOMSK, BY A CURRENT MOSCOW THEATER PRODUCTION IN DUSSELDORF, A GROWTH IN TOURISM, AND EXCHANGES OF ART EXHIBITS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND BONN, ETC., ETC. THE KEY EVENT, ACCORDING TO GRIGOR'YANTS, WAS BREZHNEV'S BONN VISIT, WHEN AGREEMENT FOR FURTHER DEEPENING DETENTE WAS ACHIEVED WITH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND A "NEW STAGE" IN EXPANDING RELATIONS "IN ALL SPHERES" WAS MARKED. GRIGOR'YANTS ADDS THAT THE "MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING" ACHIEVED BETWEEN FRG AND SOVIET UNION FOLLOWING THE VISIT IS CREATING A "FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR REDUCING CONFIDENTIAL

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MILITARY OPPOSITION (PROTIVOSTOYANIYA) ON THE (EUROPEAN) CONTINENT."

2. GRIGOR'YANTS ARGUES THAT FURTHER EFFORTS TO ADVANCE DETENTE ARE NECESSARY ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THE "CURRENT AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION HAS ADOPTED A COURSE OF UNDERMINING DETENTE POLICY AND SHARPENING RELATIONS" WITH THE USSR. WASHINGTON, AND WEST GERMAN "CIRCLES" (IDENTIFIED SUBSEQUENTLY AS REVANCHISTS, NEO-FASCISTS, ETC.), ARE AROUSING CONCERN IN EUROPE BY OPPOSING THE OBJECTIVE NEEDS OF THE "OLD WORLD."

3. PRAVDA'S YURIY ZHUKOV, IN CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF SOVIET FRENCH SECTION OF SOVIET PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, COMMENTS AUGUST 14 ON FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS ALONG SIMILAR BUT MUCH MORE SUBDUED LINES. IN TRACING DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS OVER THE POST-WAR YEARS, ZHUKOV PUTS PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE OCTOBER 1971 BREZHNEV-DE GAULLE AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION AND THE ENSUING "REGULAR MEETINGS" AT THE SUMMIT. THE BREZHNEV-GISCARD

STATEMENT ON DETENTE AND OTHER AGREEMENTS
SIGNED IN JUNE 1977 ARE DESCRIBED AS "DETENTE IN
ACTION." INTERGOVERNMENTAL FOLLOW-UP CONSULTATIONS
ON DISARMAMENT AND "HOT SPOTS" ON THE GLOBE ARE
CITED AS "FRUITFUL."

4. ZHUKOV ALSO PRAISES THE LEVEL OF TRADE AND
ECONOMIC COOPERATION, CITING (PRESUMABLY BY CON-
TRAST TO TRADE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY WASHINGTON)
EXTENDING OF MFN TREATMENT IN 1951 AND THE GRANTING
OF CREDITS BACKED BY GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES. HE
DESCRIBES RECENT VISIT OF FRENCH FOREIGN TRADE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 19341

MINISTER DENIAU AS GIVING "IMPORTANT IMPETUS" TO
FURTHER COOPERATION, BUT SUGGESTS THAT FRANCE, IN
CONFORMITY TO THE UNDERSTANDING ON BALANCED TRADE
TURNOVER, SHOULD BE BUYING MORE SOVIET MACHINERY

AND EQUIPMENT. ZHUKOV ALSO ASSERTS THAT THE "PRINCIPLE OF COMPENSATION DEALS" IS RECEIVING EVER LARGER APPLICATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LONG-TERM AGREEMENTS. ZHUKOV NOTES THAT THE UPCOMING 13TH MEETING OF THE FRENCH-SOVIET "GRANDE COMMISSION" IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER, AND MILITARY CONTACTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONTINUING.

5. PRAVDA COMMENTATOR CONCLUDES THAT THE HIGHEST INTERESTS AND SECURITY OF BOTH COUNTRIES REQUIRE THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS IN THE FACE OF THE "INTRIGUES OF DETENTE'S OPPONENTS, WHEREVER THEY OPERATE." ZHUKOV NOTES THAT, AS BEFORE, "INFLUENTIAL PRO-ATLANTIC FORCES" ARE OPERATING IN FRANCE TO OPPOSE POLICIES OF COOPERATION WITH THE USSR.

6. COMMENT: BOTH COMMENTARIES ARE WRITTEN IN THE DECLAMATORY STYLE WHICH CHARACTERIZES SOVIET WRITING WHEN THERE IS A LOT LESS SUBSTANCE THAN MEETS THE EYE. EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH FRG DIPLOMATS HERE SUGGESTED THAT LITTLE NEW WAS IN FACT HAPPENING IN BILATERAL RELATIONS DESPITE THE MEDIA'S RHETORIC FOLLOWING BREZHNEV'S MINSK SPEECH (REFTEL). IT IS INTERESTING THAT SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE FRG ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING MORE EFFUSIVE TREATMENT THAN FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS, WHICH A YEAR AGO -- BEFORE BREZHNEV'S VISIT TO BONN, BEFORE THE RECENT ACTIVIZATION OF FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY ON DISARMAMENT QUESTIONS AND TOWARDS AFRICA -- RECEIVED THE LION'S SHARE OF CORDIALITY. BOTH COMMENTARIES ARE AT LEAST INDICATIVE OF THE LEVEL OF WARMTH THE SOVIETS WOULD LIKE TO ATTAIN, AGAINST THE CURRENT BACKGROUND OF MORE TROUBLED RELATIONS WITH WASHINGTON, IN RELATIONS WITH PARIS AND BONN, BUT THEY EVADE TREATING THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES STANDING IN THE WAY OF REAL PROGRESS.

7. THE SUGGESTION THAT FRANCE INCREASE IMPORTS OF
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SOVIET MACHINERY IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE MUCH PRACTICAL IMPACT, PARTICULARLY INASMUCH AS FRENCH EXPORTS TO THE USSR ARE DOWN SHARPLY FROM 1977 AND FEW NEW

CONTRACTS FOR FRENCH MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT
APPARENTLY ARE BEING SIGNED. AS NOTED MOSCOW 18461,
SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER PATOLICHEV INFORMED
DENIAU DURING LATTER'S VISIT THAT THIS SITUATION
PROBABLY WILL CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME. TOON

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